

Town Manager's Monthly Report for February 2021



TOWN MANAGER'S UPDATE ... all meetings are virtual unless otherwise indicated.

- Along with the Town Clerk and Finance Manager, I attended Edmunds training on February 2 and 4, 2021.
- Attended Beebe's Covid -19 Town Hall meeting on February 3 and 25, 2021.
- Attended the ACT meeting on Thursday, February 4, 2021.
- Along with the Town Clerk attended the Community by Diligent agenda management software kick-off meeting.
- Attended Making Mitigation Work on February 9, 2021.
- Consulted with GMB Engineering group regarding drainage issues.
- Met with ACT members to review the current Charter.
- Attended the ICMA Northeast City Managers Association meeting on February 12, 2021.
- Attended the Governor's Call on February 16, 2021.
- Attended the DFIT Finance Committee meeting on February 16, 2021.
- Along with the Town Clerk attended Community by Diligent training on February 17, 22, 2021.
- Attended the Infrastructure Committee meeting on February 19, 2021.
- Attended Court hearing on February 25, 2021.
- Along with the Building Code Official attended pre-development meeting with SoDel Concepts on February 26, 2021.
- Attended Energy and Climate workshop sponsored by Senator Hansen regarding Off-Shore Wind on February 26, 2021.
- Attended Fenwick Island Town Council Meeting on February 26, 2021.

• **Sidewalks**

- Representative Gray was able to include \$250,000 in the State's FY 2020 bond bill for Coastal Highway Sidewalks – June 2019
- Fall 2019, We have received approval from the State to begin work.
- We were pleased to learn the Fenwick Island sidewalks are part of the Proposed FY21 to FY 26 DeDOT Capital Transportation Program. The sidewalk project was ranked 13 out of 116 projects. We attended the public hearing in Georgetown to encourage the project be moved up. Planning and Engineering are scheduled to start in July 2023, right-of-way work will begin in July of 2025 with construction beginning most likely in July 2026.
- We are seeking proposals for engineering work on a five- block sidewalk project scheduled to begin in Fall of 2020.

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- Met on October 8, 2019 to discuss Kercher proposal.
- Met on November 20, 2019 to discuss Century Engineering proposal.
- We are recommending the Century Engineering proposal be accepted.
- Kick off meeting was held on January 28, 2020.
- CTF funding approved and equipment ordered.
- Initial Plans were presented in May 2020.
- Fenwick Island Sidewalks are still in the DelDOT Capital Transportation Program; however, they have been moved to FY 2026 and are ranked 26th.
- We are working with Century Engineering to pursue a TAP grant.
- Along with Committee Chair Carmean, Council member Weistling and Sonia Marichic-Goudy of Century Engineering (virtually) met on July 21, 2020, with Senator Hocker and Representative Gray to discuss support for the sidewalk project.
- Discussion meetings were held with all but one affected property owner the week of August 24, 2020. A letter discussing the impact of the sidewalk to the property was sent to the one property owner who declined to meet.
- Follow-up letters were sent to the property owners in August 2020. Two responded with concerns regarding liability during construction. Those concerns were addressed. The Town requires any contractor working for the Town to provide proof of liability and workers compensation insurance.
- Staff will be working on requesting letters of support from the property owners by the end of September.
- Staff drafted letters of support and Century Engineering is reviewing them.
- In October 2020, staff mailed letters requesting support for our sidewalk project to the ten property owners involved. We also sent a follow-up letter at the end of October. We have received one objection and two letters of support as of October 30, 2020.
- Ten properties are affected by the sidewalk project. In November 2020, we received five letters of support (4 from affected property owners and one from the head of the Business Development Committee). Two letters were received that did not support the project. Three properties did not respond. One property verbally told us they had no issues with the project.
- We met with Century engineering to determine next steps for this project. As of November 13, 2020, we are currently waiting to meet with DelDOT.
- Received an update from Century Engineering on December 15, 2020, regarding their meeting with DelDOT.
- We are pursuing a meeting with our Legislators, DelDOT and Century Engineering on proceeding with the sidewalk project. We believe we could move a portion of DelDOT's capital plans for sidewalks along Route 1 up by few years.
- Met with Century Engineering, Senator Hocker's office, Representative Gray and DelDOT officials on January 22, 2021 to discuss a path forward.



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Dredging

- We are currently working on an MOU with Freeman Companies and exploring Engineering firms.
- We are currently seeking proposals from two engineering firms.
- Met with members of the Dredging Committee to interview two engineering firms regarding the dredging project on July 1 and July 3.
- Anchor QEA of Lewes, DE was selected for the engineering work on the dredging project.
- We are working with Anchor QEA to set up a site visit.
- A kick-off meeting with our engineer, Anchor QEA, Freeman and Company was held on October 16, 2019.
- The Site visit was held on October 28, 2019.
- Engineering work is currently being conducted.
- Along with Council members Merritt, Weistling, Consultant Tony Pratt, met with Anchor on March 9, 2020 to discuss project and next steps.
- On June 26, 2020, Council approved spending up to \$6,000 for a bathymetric survey of Little Assawoman Bay.
- Met virtually on, July 10, 2020, with Steve Bagnall of Anchor QEA to discuss dredging project.
- Met virtually on, July 21, 2020, with Steve Bagnall of Anchor QEA to discuss and update the Dredging Committee on the dredging project.
- In October 2020, Anchor was wrapping up the preliminary design drawings for the project to be provided to Freeman and Company to advance the MOA and to be used in the permit applications for DNREC and USACE.
- We received the 30% Design drawings for the bay dredging project from Anchor. These drawings will be used for permit applications. These 30% Drawings will be further developed in the final (bid set) design as we move on to that phase while the permit application review is ongoing.
- Met with Anchor Engineering to discuss next steps on February 10, 2021 to discuss the current estimate and time line.

Corona virus

- Adopted Covid-19 leave policy. March 2020.
- Adopted telework policy and form – March 2020.
- Investigated teleconferencing tools- March 2020.
- Drafted checklist for teleconferencing meetings- April 2020.
- Drafted script for teleconferencing Council meetings- April 2020.
- Coordinated efforts to continue operations remotely – April 2020.
- Coordinated staff safety measures – alternating staff remote working and in office. April 2020.
- Secured buildings May 2020.
- Stocked supplies to reopen safely. May 2020.



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- Developed re-opening procedures for Beach, Town offices and facilities.
- We have opened the beaches.
- Council adopted a resolution on May 29, 2020, allowing additional outdoor seating at restaurants and outdoor sale areas.
- Council adopted a resolution on June 24, 2020, allowing farm produce stands in Fenwick Island when certain conditions are met.
- Council extended the Covid policy until December 31, 2020 at their August 2020 Council meeting.
- Fenwick Island residents were urged to get tested in October 2020, as we have seen a surge in the number of Covid cases locally.
- As the positivity rate of Covid has increased in recent months, all meetings have been conducted virtually. We have also moved back to rotating staff in and out of Town Hall beginning in December 2020.
- Police Department employees were offered the vaccine. One employee elected to receive the vaccine.
- Other municipal employees are in category 1C. The State of Delaware has delayed administering the vaccine to 1C until mid to late March 2021.

Community by Diligent – Agenda Management and Governance Solution Software

- The FY 2021 Capital Plan included the purchase of agenda management software.
- In February 2021, we initiated the implementation of the software.
- The project also includes purchasing iPads for Council members, Town Manager and Town Clerk.
- The Town Manager and Town Clerk have begun e-training and have a planned training session on February 22, 2021.
- We will begin training for Council on using the software sometime in March and plan to implement the program's use with March's Council meeting.
- This software has the following capabilities:
 - Agenda and book creation
 - Council member cross-device annotations
 - One-click print for meeting material
 - Enhanced accessibility features
 - Improved mobile -first user interface
 - Fewer clicks and more productivity
 - Powerful search capabilities
 - Localized community-specific user interface
 - Social media integrations

Response to Public Comments

- Light installation at Fenwick Shores

The hotel installed gas torch lights which were included in the construction plans and as well as submitted to the Fire Marshal on 02-08-2019. Installation is complete with two lights each

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flush mounted to the parapet wall on the front, side, and rear of the pool deck. After reviewing the installation and product information staff has determined that these lights do not shed enough lumens to create a disturbance to the surrounding area.

- Why do we not transcribe minutes for public comments?

Minutes are to record the business of the Council. Minutes record what is done, not what is said. The purpose of minutes is to record the actions taken by the Council. In addition, transcribing minutes for public comments are discouraged because:

1. Violates the fundamental purpose of minutes.
2. Can create liability for the organization or individuals in case of lawsuit.
3. Tends to personalize and politicize the discussion. Public comment can be opinion and not factually based.
4. Can intimidate participants, preventing them from speaking freely.
5. Absorbs too much staff time and takes the group's time.
6. Makes it harder to find actions taken.

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa Tieman
Town Manager